



State of California  
The Natural Resources Agency  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	San Diego Back Country Fuel Reduction Project		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	1) Dyke Property: NE ¼ SW ¼, Sec. 21, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; 2) Dartmouth Property: NE ¼ SE ¼, Sec. 21, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; SE ¼ NE ¼, Sec. 21, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; SW ¼ NW ¼, Sec. 22, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; NW ¼ SW ¼, Sec. 22, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; 3) Wright's Field: W ¼ NW ¼, Sec. 34, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; NE ¼ NW ¼, Sec. 34, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; 4) Findel Ranch: SE ¼ SW ¼, Sec. 34, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; SW ¼ SE ¼, Sec. 34, T15S, R2E, SBB&M; NE ¼ NW ¼, Sec. 3, T16S, R2E, SBB&M		
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Sam Lopez, Environmental Services Manager, Urban Corps of San Diego County, slopez@urbancorps.org		
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<b>COUNTY</b>	San Diego		

### Project Description:

The proposed program would employ and train local at-risk young adults to complete defensible space and hazardous fuel reduction activities on 39 acres of conservation lands in the SRA owned by the Back Country Land Trust (BCLT) in Alpine, San Diego County. Strategic fuel reduction activities will directly improve fire safety conditions for adjacent residences and evacuation routes while protecting the recreational and habitat values of the BCLT properties and preventing the spread of wildfire to Alpine's village core.

South of the highway, fuel reduction activities are planned for 5 acres of the Findel Ranch property along BCLT property lines abutting homes and roads, as well as 19 acres out of the 230-acre Wright's Field MSCP Preserve along the north and west property lines. North of the highway, about 15 acres of fuel reduction are recommended by local fire agencies on the Dyke and Dartmouth properties. These properties are directly adjacent to homes and roads which will be protected through improved brush management on BCLT lands. In some cases, 100' defensible space clearances around nearby homes extend onto BCLT property, and these homes will benefit from additional fuel reduction beyond their own property lines. The objectives are to create up to 200 feet of defensible space on the perimeters of BCLT properties with the most heavily cleared areas along fencelines adjacent to homes and vehicle access points. For Wright's Field, Findel Ranch, and the Dyke property, the prescription includes 75% fuel reduction within 50 feet of the property line, 50% reduction up to 100 feet from the property line, 25% reduction up to 150 feet, and removal of flammable non-native vegetation up to 200 feet. Within oak woodland habitat, ladder fuels including non-native tamarisk and Russian olive will be removed to reduce the risk of crown fires. Fuel reduction on the Dartmouth property will take place up to 30 feet off the roadway and on those portions of neighboring homes' 200 foot zoned defensible space boundaries that extend onto BCLT property. The project work will be implemented by hand crews using manual methods: lop and scatter, trimming, pruning, chipping and hand piling; with no removal of root structures. Depending on the location and access, the cut material generated as a result of this project will be chipped and spread on site, not to exceed three inches in depth.

### EXEMPTION STATUS

- |                                     |   |                       |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Categorical Exemption                         | Type/Section: Class 4 | 1530. Minor Alterations to Land |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Statutory Exemption (state code section):     |                       |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)             |                       |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))   |                       |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c)) |                       |                                 |

### REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under the description for a Class 4 Categorical Exemption pertaining to minor alterations to land as identified in the CEQA Guidelines. After completing an environmental analysis, the Department has determined this project will have no significant impact on the environment. This determination is based on field assessments, a CNDDB and RareFind, and BIOS search, an archaeological review, and greenhouse gas emission calculations completed by CAL FIRE Resource Management staff.



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Review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE MVU Headquarters in El Cajon.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

 10/19/16

Helge Eng, Deputy Director  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

OCT 24 2016

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE